> The reconstruction of the Ministry is not merely a refusal to the national request of last winter for a Ministry possessing the public confidence. The public would for the present at least be content with able Ministers who knew their work. The choices made have been ruled by two principles : the dismissal of all Ministers who signed last October a request for a Ministry of public confidence ; selection only from the very limited number of extreme Russian Conservatives. These last formerly worked with the German elements in the Court for reaction against the Duma. The Emperor wishes to fight the Germans but to retain the unnational system of representation, and the two objects cannot possibly be harmonised ; hence the dangerous significance of an attempt to bring foreign policy into line with home policy. Able men cannot be found in this small group and men of principle are rare. . . ."

Apologists for the ancient regime urge that the efforts that were put forth by the Russian Government to remedy the defects which led to the *Reconstruction* calamities of 1915 had completely changed *attempts fail* the situation, so that the real justification for the Revolution had long ago disappeared. The answer to these contentions is to be found in some of the reports I have already quoted as to the appalling conditions both at the front and in the Russian towns during the winter of

1916-17.

The Czar in the autumn of 1915, with his confidence unnerved by calamity, was in a mood to make terms with the popular leaders in Petrograd, Moscow and the provinces. The Duma was called into consultation and as an essential condition of their